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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

March 21, 2011

**0373**

The Honorable Julius Genachowski  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

I write to you to address concerns that I have heard from public safety officials in New York regarding the Federal Communication Commission's requirement that all public safety land mobile radio systems operating in the 150-512 MHz radio bands cease operating using 25 kHz efficiency technology, and begin operating using at least 12.5 kHz efficiency technology, commonly known as "narrowbanding." I understand the need to ensure that the existing public safety spectrum is used as efficiently as possible, however, I am concerned that municipalities will need to purchase equipment to meet the 2013 deadline and then may need to purchase additional equipment again in just a few years as the public safety spectrum shifts to the 700MHz interoperable bandwidth.

As you may know, I am a cosponsor of S. 28, the Public Safety Spectrum and Wireless Communications Act. This legislation directs the FCC to grant 10 additional megahertz of the wireless spectrum for exclusive use by public safety to allow for the development of a national, interoperable broadband network for all public safety officials across the United States. President Obama has called for this, as a part of his Wireless Initiative, to begin by the 10th anniversary of the September 11th attacks. This legislation would accomplish this goal and creates a forward-looking new paradigm for interoperable communications so that public safety will be able to utilize cutting-edge technology to share data and information. Moreover, this legislation would generate the necessary revenue to pay for the development and deployment of this network, and does not place any burdensome requirements on public safety entities to return the spectrum that they currently use.

I request that as you look to the 2013 narrowbanding deadline, you take into consideration the inevitable impact of a public safety broadband network, as designed in S. 28, on your current requirements. This is to make sure that the federal government is using a holistic and cost-effective approach to ensure that public safety has the necessary resources to meet future communications needs.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Kirsten E. Gillibrand  
United States Senator



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

August 19, 2011

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Kirsten E. Gillibrand  
United States Senate  
478 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's January 1, 2013 narrowbanding deadline. In recognition of the budgetary pressures many for public safety agencies face, the Commission took care to determine an appropriate transition period for narrowbanding that balanced the economic and operational impacts on of existing users, including rejecting calls for a more aggressive deadline.

The transition is well-underway and many licensees have converted their systems to more efficient narrowband operations. Licensees operating wideband systems after the deadline risk new problems – potentially experiencing reduced interoperability with systems already converted to narrowband, causing inadvertent harmful interference to other licensees operating on adjacent narrowband channels, and the increasing costs of maintaining aging and obsolete wideband devices.

While the future public safety broadband network has vast potential, we anticipate that public safety agencies will need to maintain and invest in their narrowband systems until the broadband network becomes available. For these reasons, the January 2013 narrowbanding deadline remains important. As always, however, and as detailed in the Commission's recent Public Notice, we are prepared to consider the particular circumstances of licensees facing unique challenges in meeting the narrowbanding requirement. The Public Notice is enclosed for your convenience.

I appreciate your letting me know of your concerns about this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Julius Genachowski", is written over a horizontal line.

Julius Genachowski

Enclosure